Bible & Daily Living

Call to choose

By WILLIAM L. TRIMYER
A CALL TO CHOOSE
Lesson for December 9, 1984
Bible Study Passages: Neh. 8:1-3, 9-10; 9:1-3
INTRODUCTION

Some decisions are difficult to make. It's not too difficult to get up in the morning and choose which clothes we will put on for the day. It probably doesn't require too much thought to decide what we will eat for breakfast, unless, of course, you are terribly picky! I always have a hard time choosing which tie to wear with a particular suit.

There's an old saying that says you can put off until tomorrow what you should be doing today! Some of the decision we face in life are like that. We would rather make those decisions tomorrow than to decide today. Besides, we have plenty of time...or so we think.

It's interesting, but choosing not to decide is in itself a decision. But tomorrow always comes and we are faced once again with a decision that haunts us like a cat stalks a mouse. We can't get away from those decisions we know we need to settle, and until they are settled nothing will be settled.

We can't wait forever to decide upon a life's vocation. We can't wait forever to decide if we will have children or not. We cannot wait forever to decide about our relationship with God. To decide no is to decide. There is another old saying that says "Opportunity knocks only once." But that is not quite true, for opportunity may knock several times, but it will not knock forever.

This week's lesson looks at this business of decision. Nehemiah summoned the people of Israel to follow the laws of God. He called upon them to confess their sin and to renew their covenant with the Lord.

RENEWAL WITH THE OLD, OLD BOOK [Neh. 8:1-3]

You will recall from your Bible study that it was Nehemiah who led the rebuilding campaign to restore Jerusalem and its walls following the Babylonian invasion. It was after the walls of the city were raised that Nehemiah called the people together. The priest Ezra was called upon to read the Law of Moses. It was understood in those times that a person could benefit from hearing the Law read.

I wonder if we believe that anymore? Do we believe that hearing the Bible read can edify the believer? How often do you hear the Bible read in worship except for an occasional verse or two? We place a lot of emphasis upon reading the Bible but we do not place equal emphasis upon hearing the Word read. We must remember that God blesses both the reading and the hearing of His Word.

The scripture indicates that when Ezra unrolled the sacred scripture, the people stood to their feet in reverence. Following the reading there was interpretation of the selected passage. Understanding is important if people are going to know God's Word. Many people need help in discerning what God is saying to them.

THE PEOPLE RESPOND [Neh. 8:9-10]

The day Ezra read from the Law became a "holy moment." When the Law was read the people turned their attention from their way of transgression to embrace the Word of God. As a sign of their repentance, the people broke into weeping. But their weeping soon turned into joy as they celebrated the return to their native homeland. They celebrated this special day with a feast of food and drink.

Christians have a great deal to celebrate. It is unfortunate that some Christians have not learned to celebrate life and death. It is good to rejoice over the Lord's blessings in our life. Worship was meant ot be a time of joy, not a time to put on a "long face."

A COVENANT RENEWAL [Neh. 9:1-3]

A lasting religious experience is one which rests upon a covenant relationship. Some revivals are but an "emotional shot in the arm" that doesn't take. When the wayward Israelites listened again to the story of God's dealings in their history, they were moved to repentance and a rededication to walk in God's Word the rest of their days.

There are times when we need to renew our commitment to walk with the Lord. It is important to maintain our commitment so that we do not walk away and forget to whom we belong. Confession is an important ingredient in the life of the Christian.

Ponder the following questions:

1. Identify a decision you have been putting off.
2. What is keeping you from doing what you know you need to do in your life and in your relationship with God?
3. Is there anything about your faith that is worth celebrating?

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Dr. Trimyer is pastor of Kentuck Baptist Church in Ringgold, Va (WLYP.)

We would like to take this opportunity to let each of you know how much we appreciate everything that was done for us during Hunter's stay in the hospital and since his return home.

Your thoughtfulness thru prayers, cards, flowers, food, phone calls, gifts, and visits will always be remembered and appreciated.

The prayers, love and concern of so many has been our strength daily.

A very special thank you to our pastors, Revs. Sallye and Clarence Bowen.

May God Bless each of you.

Hunter, Edith, Sonny, Joyce and Mary Tolley

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Times-Virginian WORSHIP

Catholics preparing for four Sundays of Advent

"Teaching not preaching" is what the parishioners of Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church will hear from the pulpit during the four Sundays of the Advent season that began Dec. 2.

Pastor Richard Kirch announced his intent to focus on the Advent season by teaching the origins of Advent and the meaning of the season.

Advent is a season of preparation for Christmas.

Our hearts are to be prepared for the incredible gift of the incarnation; this season is to afford the Christian an opportunity to think clearly and soberly about the mystery of God becoming flesh.

As we await the coming of the Redeemer, members of the local church share the loss of two parish families. Nathaniel Cullen, husband of Ann and and father of Ann Riley died while in New York on a birthday trip. Beatrice M. Dever, mother of Clare Hansen died in Massachusetts on Saturday. The coming and going will always be with us until the final coming of the Lord, who will raise us all.

On Friday, Dec. 7 at 7 p.m. we will celebrate the feast of the immaculate conception.

Regular Sunday mass is held each week at 11:30 a.m. The church is located off route 24 on route 627.

The Rev. Lewis preaches sermon at Zion Baptist

By SUSIE HUNTER

The Rev. Lewis conducted the worship service at Zion Baptist Church Sunday.

The Pastor's Aid Club will meet today (Wednesday) at 7 p.m. at the church. All members are asked to be present. The Ladies' Aid club will meet Sunday at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ross Edward at 2 p.m. All members are asked to bring a song, poem or other item pertaining to Christmas.

Mrs. Beatrice Jennings is still in the intensive care unit of Lynchburg General Hospital. We wish her a speedy recovery.

The prayer and Bible study sessions to be held Thursday, Dec. 6 and Thursday, Dec. 13 will be the last sessions held until March at Zion Baptist.

We are happy to have the Rev. Lewis back from vacation.

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Jordan news

The Young Adult Choir at Jordan Baptist Church will practice Tuesday evening at 7:30 p.m. All members are asked to be present.

Regular second-Sunday evening worship services will be held at 6:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend. Members are reminded to make their donations to the Basement Fund at this time.

The Church Calendar for the 1985 program of work will be planned on Dec. 13 at 7:00 p.m. Each organization is asked to have a representative at this planning session.

The Ladies' Quild will meet Dec. 15 at 7:00 p.m.

On the third Sunday, Dec. 16, at 3 p.m. The Spiritual Knights will be sponsoring a special program.

Church Business Meeting will be held Tuesday, Dec. 18 at 7 p.m.

The Sunday School will sponsor their annual Christmas program, Sunday, Dec. 23, at 7 p.m. Come out and get your holidays off to a good start.

We are glad that Deacon Jack Lamberth has returned home and is doing nicely.

Mt. Pleasant news

Pastor Napier had a wonderful message for his waiting congregation at Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church Sunday. The Sunshine Choir furnished the music.

The Pastor's Aid program last Sunday was delightful. The Rev. Stanley Wesley delivered a wonderful message, and the Gospel Chorus sang, along with the pastor and his wife.

A three-way sermonette will be held at Mt. Pleasant Dec. 9 at 8 p.m. Pastors Wesley, Edward and Spinner will preach.

Wednesday night at 6 p.m. a practice session will be held at Mt. Pleasant, in preparation for the Christmas program. Bible Study will be at 7 p.m. Wednesday.

Our prayers go out to the sick and the shut-in.

Promise Land news

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift."

We extend an invitation to you to worship with us on Sunday at 10 a.m. for Sunday School and 11 a.m. for regular worship service.

The Men's Club will celebrate their anniversary Sunday. The Pleasant Valley Mens Choir will be their guests. Time of program is 3 p.m. on Sunday, December 9.

On Sunday, December 16, the Rev. Tim Lawing will be our special guest speaker. The youth will be sponsoring the program for the benefit of the building fund. The Rev. Lawing will be bringing one of his guest choirs. Time of service is 3 p.m.

The annual Christmas program will be held on Sunday, December 23, after the regular worship service.

Special prayers go out to the brother of Mrs. Grace Forest.

Among our sick is Mr. John LeGrand.

Let us remember our sick and shut-in in our deeds, thoughts and prayers.

St. Luke news notes

The Rev. James Franklin of Pamplin conducted services at St. Luke Baptist Church the first and third Sundays of November. The Rev. R.R. Jones was on vacation.

The Senior Choir rendered music, and the Young Adult Ushers and Junior Ushers collected the offering.

The congregation was shocked by the sudden death of Mr. William Clark. The Rev. R. Jones conducted his funeral services. Mr. Clark was buried in the St. Luke cemetery. The Rev. S.C. Terry assisted the Rev. Clark with the service.

Mrs. Virginia Brogdan and Mrs. Kattie Gains gave a surprise 25th anniversary dinner for their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Goldsburry Smith, recently in the home of Mr. and Mrs. David Gains.

Six of Mr. and Mrs. George F. Martin's children were home with them to enjoy the Thanksgiving holiday. Mrs. Louise Canada was dinner guest of the same family.

The Senior Citizen's Club of St. Luke will hold a talent program Dec. 9 at 3 p.m.

Mr. Samuel Canada, his two sons Wesley and Sampson, and Mrs. Olie Smith, Mrs. Annie Younger and Mrs. Louise Canada went to Washington for a one-day trip to visit Mrs. Gertrude Nelson, a relative of the family, recently.

Mt. Shiloh news notes

The annual Widow's Day program at Mt. Shiloh Baptist Church was very successful. An appreciative crowd attended this service honoring the widows of the church.

The public is invited to attend morning services Sunday at 11:30 a.m.

The Appomattox Branch of the NAACP will meet in the Galilee Baptist Church fellowship hall, Dec. 10 at 7:30 p.m. Election of officers will take place at this meeting.

Remember to see Charlie Ed Tanner or Herbert Fleshman, members of the Appomattox Assembly for Christmas candies.

The Young Adult Chorus will meet Wednesday, at 5:30 p.m.

Appomattox Assembly to meet

The Appomattox Assembly will hold its regular monthly meeting in the AMS Annex on Thursday, Dec. 6, at 7 p.m. All members are urged to be present. The meeting is open to all Appomattox citizens interested in aiding in community efforts.

The Assembly Christmas candy sale is underway. Place orders now with any member, or call 352-2368/2284.

The Assembly appreciates those many calls supporting the citizen's petition for better traffic control in the town. It is suggested that sympathizers write to "The Editor", Times-Virginian, expressing their views; also contact your County Supervisor with your concern.

A second Pledge Drive for the R.Q. Lawing Memorial Scholarship Fund has begun. The goal is a $10,000 minimum to be used as a base amount, invested in five-year savings certificates. The interest from this investment, plus a continuing effort will be applied to a college scholarship beginning in 1987.

A substantial base amount is imperative in order to make the awards meaningful; especially in the light of extremely high and soaring college costs.

Please mail your contributions to: The Appomattox Assembly, Inc., P.O. Box 2169, Appomattox, Va. 24522; or if you desire a Pledge Card for donations of $100, or more, call The Assembly, 352-2284.

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